

SERS-O-GRAM

A newsletter for members of the State Employees' Retirement System of Illinois

AUGUST 1999

In this edition of the SERS-O-Gram, we examine your enclosed Annual Benefit Statement, which contains all of the information about your SERS account for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1999.

Review your Benefit Statement carefully. If you have questions, or disagree with the information provided, contact us at any of the telephone numbers listed on your statement.

QILDRO

The Illinois General Assembly established the **Qualified Illinois Domestic Relations Order** (QILDRO) effective July 1, 1999. The QILDRO allows for the division of a retirement benefit or a refund of contributions due to divorce. It does not establish a new benefit, nor does it create a new member or beneficiary.

Generally, the QILDRO orders the payment of a benefit to the spouse, a child or other dependent. The QILDRO does not apply to lump sum death benefits, survivor annuities, or disability benefits.

The QILDRO is usually issued at the time of divorce and sent to the member's retirement system. The QILDRO must state when it would go into effect and the specific dollar amount to be deducted from a refund or retirement benefit.

A QILDRO expires if the member takes a refund prior to retirement or

SERS Office Visits

Your annual Benefit Statement shows you any service credit you may purchase and estimates your SERS retirement benefit. If you would like us to do a more precise pension estimate or service credit purchase for you, we encourage you to call us two to three days prior to your planned visit to our office.



This time allows SERS staff to calculate and verify your account, ensuring that the information we give you is as accurate as possible.

Making an appointment isn't necessary—just a phone call a few days before you come by. When you arrive, the information is ready, making your trip faster and easier. We can then discuss your account with you and answer any questions you may have.

If you would like a calculation completed, or just have a question, call us at 217-524-1414. Our office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

dies. A QILDRO would also expire if the alternate payee dies, and the benefit would be returned to the member. The QILDRO benefit may not be passed on to another person.

Any member who has questions about a QILDRO should discuss it with their attorney. If a QILDRO will be used in a divorce settlement, the member should contact the retirement system in which they participate.

Legislative Update

Despite the rampant rumors about a proposed Early Retirement Incentive during the spring legislative session, no action was taken on this, nor any other legislation affecting state employees.

We will report any relevant legislation from the fall veto session in the April, 2000 SERS-O-GRAM.

SERS on the Web

Internet:
<http://www.state.il.us/srs>

E-Mail: ser@pop.state.il.us

Understanding Your Statement

The enclosed annual Benefit Statement gives you specific information about your SERS account. In this article we highlight areas of the statement where members have the most questions.

If you do not agree with the service shown on your statement, contact the SERS Accounting Division at 217-785-7191.

If you are currently establishing service credit, it will not be shown on your statement until it is paid in full.

If you have questions about the SERS benefits shown on your statement, contact the Claims Division at 217-785-7325, not your Retirement Coordinator.

Retirement benefits are presented two different ways:

- The **PROJECTED** benefit assumes continuous service to your normal retirement age, or 35 years of service, your current retirement formula, and final average compensation.

- If you have at least 8 years of service with SERS, your **ACCRUED** benefit as of June 30 is based on your years of service, retirement formula, and final average compensa-

State Employees' Retirement System of Illinois

2101 South Veterans Parkway, P.O. Box 10255, Springfield, IL 62704-0255

Your Annual Benefit Statement has been prepared as of June 30, 1999 using the following information:

75551 A 10881
SERS MEMBER
ANY SUBJECT
ANY CITY, IL 66554

Social Security # 123-45-6789 Date of Birth December 24, 1939

MEMBER INFORMATION

You have 241.00 months of contributing membership service. This does not include service forfeited by taking a refund, unused sick or vacation time, or any service credit in a reciprocal retirement system listed on the reverse side.

You have approximately 8.00 months of service in the ILLINOIS MUNICIPAL RETIREMENT FUND. Under the Reciprocity Act, you may use service of one year or more in a reciprocal retirement system in computing retirement and survivor benefits. Your reciprocal service has not been used in the calculation of benefits in this statement.

You may be eligible to establish military service with the State Employees' Retirement System (SERS). For each month of military service credit that you purchase, your pension will increase by approximately \$5.10 per month. Before SERS can grant any service or determine cost, we must have a copy of your DD 214 or the appropriate separation or discharge papers verifying active duty.

Your total contributions are \$25,555.85. Contributions applicable to fiscal year 1999 (July 1-June 30) were \$1,793.31. Your monthly rate of pay as of June 30, 1999 is \$3,414.00. Your final average compensation is \$3,646.20, which is the average of your highest consecutive 4 years (48 months) of your last 10 years (120 months) of state employment.

For assistance in filing a claim for benefits or participating in a pre-retirement workshop, contact your retirement coordinator for your agency: RETIREMENT COORDINATOR at 217-785-2131.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Retirement benefits are based on service, final average compensation and age. Normal retirement is age 60 with 8 years (96 months) of service. After 35 years (420 months) of service you may retire at any age. If you continue working to normal retirement age, or 35 years of service, whichever comes first, your estimated monthly retirement benefit will be \$1,370.00 on January 01, 2000.

Your monthly benefit earned and accrued as of June 30, 1999 is \$1,220.00, payable on January 01, 2000.

For each month (21 days) of sick and vacation time you accumulate by your normal date of retirement, your retirement annuity will increase by \$5.10 per month. See the sick leave and vacation service credit section on the reverse side.

As a contributing member to social security, you may wish to read the social security and the federal income tax payment information sections on the reverse side.

DEATH BENEFITS

Death benefits are payable to your spouse, or beneficiary, as applicable. The benefit amount depends on the cause of your death—occupational or nonoccupational. Death benefits are payable to your named beneficiary.

If you wish to change your SERS beneficiary, beneficiary form is enclosed. SERS BENEFIT FROM YOUR GROUP LIFE INSURANCE. Beneficiaries are not included in this statement.

Your named beneficiary is:
1 - BENEFICIARY A

If your death results from job duties, occupational benefits are payable to your spouse by any workers' compensation benefits paid, payable if you have children under age 18 or a full-time student. Your beneficiary named above is contributing and interest totaling \$14,466.92.

If your death results from a nonoccupational death, \$610.00 per month are payable to your spouse benefit will be payable to your spouse at any age under age 18 or under age 22 and a full-time student, maximum of \$610.00. These benefits will be your social security survivor benefits. You receive \$41,274.31, which are your contributory widow/survivor contributions retained by SERS death benefit.

If you die with no spouse or children under 18 and a full-time student, your named beneficiary contributions and interest, plus a state's portion salary for each full year of service up to a maximum total lump sum benefit of \$61,950.92.

DISABILITY BENEFIT

If you become disabled, cannot perform your normal job, disability benefits will be paid to you. The benefit amount is determined by the cause of disability—occupational or nonoccupational.

Occupational benefits of \$2,560.50 per month retirement. This will be reduced by any work benefits paid.

Nonoccupational benefits of \$1,707.00 per month up to 78 months. This benefit will be reduced by any social security benefits.

In addition to your disability benefit, monthly of \$136.56 will be made on your behalf while

The At A Glance section highlights the important information from each section of your Benefit Statement.

At a Glance

as of June 30, 1999

Member Information	
Total Months of Service	241.00
Total Contributions	\$25,555.85
Your Retirement Coordinator:	RETIREMENT COORDINATOR
Retirement	
Projected Retirement Benefit	\$1,370.00
Payable on	January 01, 2000
Death	
Occupational Death Benefits	\$2,560.50
Survivor Benefits	\$41,274.31
Survivor Family Maximum	\$61,950.92
Disability	
Occupational Benefits	\$2,560.50
Nonoccupational Benefits	\$1,707.00

The monthly Occupational Death benefit represents 50% of your rate of pay.

The maximum monthly survivor benefit payable to a spouse is \$400, unless 50% of the earned pension provides a larger benefit.

The maximum monthly survivor benefit payable to a family is \$600, unless 50% of the earned pension provides a larger benefit.

The length of time you are eligible to receive disability benefits is equal to 1/2 of your service credit, minus service used and earned from any previous disability.

Estimating Your Retirement Benefit

If you are considering retirement in the near future, you can use your Benefit Statement to estimate your retirement benefit.

For example, the member on the opposite page is planning to retire on March 1, 2000 (8 months after the June 30 Benefit Statement). She will have 250 sick and vacation days (12 months). She also wants to purchase 24 months of military service before retiring.

She would find the value of each additional month of service from the Retirement Benefits section of her statement (\$5.10), and multiply that amount by the additional service she will have at the end of the year (8+12+24=44 months).

This extra service would increase her retirement benefit by \$224 per month. When this amount is added to the accrued June 30 benefit amount of \$1,220, she will have an approximate retirement benefit of \$1,444 per month on March 1, 2000.

Keeping Your Beneficiaries Current

Your named beneficiaries are located in the Death Benefits section of your Benefit Statement. It is your responsibility to keep your designations up-to-date.

Your SERS beneficiaries are separate from your Group Life Insurance beneficiaries. The people listed on your Benefit Statement are designated to receive your SERS benefits only.

You may change your beneficiaries at any time by completing and filing a Nomination of Beneficiaries form with SERS (enclosed with this publication). If you have questions about your nominated beneficiaries, call us at 217-785-6963.

New SERS Board Member



Sharmin Doering has been appointed by Governor George Ryan to the State Employees' Retirement System Board of Trustees.

Sharmin is currently employed with the Department of Transportation. She previously worked for the Department of Human Services as a Retirement Coordinator. She replaces Allen Grosboll on the Board. SERS congratulates Sharmin on her appointment.

2000 Preretirement Workshops

Reservations CANNOT be made until Sept. 1, 1999.

INTRODUCTION TO YOUR FUTURE

For employees under age 45.

Feb. 8	Chicago
Feb. 15	Springfield
Feb. 22	Alton
Feb. 29	Schaumburg
Mar. 7	Springfield
Mar. 14	Chicago
Mar. 28	Peoria
Apr. 18	Springfield
Apr. 25	Chicago
May 9	Collinsville
May 16	Champaign
May 23	Chicago
May 30	Springfield
Jun. 13	Carbondale
Jun. 15	Rockford
Jun. 20	Chicago
Jun. 27	Springfield
Jul. 11	Bloomington
Aug. 8	Springfield
Aug. 15	Charleston
Sep. 12	Joliet
Sep. 19	Mt. Vernon
Sep. 26	Matteson
Oct. 3	Springfield
Oct. 17	DeKalb
Oct. 24	Marion
Nov. 14	Springfield

EDUCATION FOR TOMORROW'S CHOICES

For employees 5–15 years from retirement.

Jan. 4 & 5	Springfield
Jan. 11 & 12	Chicago & Springfield
Jan. 18 & 19	Springfield
Jan. 25 & 26	Glen Ellyn & Springfield
Feb. 1 & 2	Springfield
Feb. 8 & 9	Springfield
Feb. 15 & 16	Chicago
Feb. 29 & Mar. 1	Marion
Mar. 7 & 8	Chicago
Mar. 14 & 15	Collinsville
Mar. 21 & 22	Schaumburg & Springfield
Apr. 4 & 5	Peoria
Apr. 11 & 12	Champaign
Apr. 18 & 19	Joliet
May 2 & 3	Chicago
May 16 & 17	DeKalb
May 30 & 31	Mt. Vernon
Jun. 6 & 7	Springfield
Jun. 13 & 14	Rockford
Jul. 11 & 12	Springfield
Aug. 1 & 2	Carbondale
Aug. 22 & 23	Chicago
Sep. 12 & 13	Springfield
Sep. 19 & 20	Schaumburg
Sep. 26 & 27	Bloomington
Oct 3 & 4	Chicago
Oct 17 & 18	Springfield
Oct 24 & 25	Matteson
Oct. 31 & Nov. 1	Springfield
Nov. 14 & 15	Collinsville & Chicago

COUNTDOWN TO RETIREMENT

For employees 3 years from retirement.

Jan. 20	Chicago
Jan. 27	Springfield
Feb. 17	Joliet
Feb. 24	Springfield
Mar. 2	Chicago
Mar. 16	Carbondale
Mar. 23	Rockford
Mar. 30	Springfield
Apr. 6	Collinsville
Apr. 20	Springfield
Apr. 27	Matteson
May 18	Schaumburg & Marion
Jun. 1	Springfield
Jun. 15	Effingham
Jul. 27	Springfield
Aug. 10	Champaign
Aug. 24	Springfield
Aug. 31	Collinsville
Sep. 14	Chicago
Sep.28	Springfield
Oct. 5	Peoria
Oct. 12	Chicago
Oct. 26	Chicago
Nov. 2	Mt. Vernon
Nov. 16	Springfield & Chicago